

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Claims 2-3 are cancelled. Claims 1 and 4-16 remain in this application and, as amended herein, are submitted for the Examiner's reconsideration.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16 have been amended solely to place the application in condition for allowance, and claims 12 and 15 have been amended solely to maintain proper antecedence. It is therefore submitted that this amendment should be entered.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 4-7, 10, 13, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hecksel (U.S. Patent No. 6,151,707) in view of Rogers (U.S. Patent No. 6,018,719) and Official Notice. Applicants submit that the claims are patentably distinguishable over the cited art.

The Hecksel patent describes a registration software program that assists users in registering software programs or in performing various post-registration survey activities. The software accesses and retrieves registration information that *the user provided during a previous registration session* and/or accesses and retrieves responses to survey questions that *the user provided during previous post-registration activity*. (See Col. 3, lns. 40-43; col. 5, lns. 23-33 and 43-47; and col. 6, lns. 13-30).

Hecksel also describes that customers may enter and transmit customer information and responses to survey questions using registration software that is executed upon installation of purchased software. The patent, however, describes that such registration software *suffers from deficiencies* in that the user is required to repeatedly input the same registration data for each new software product so that the user's time is wasted and the chances of errors in entering the data is increased, that

customers often refuse to spend the time and effort necessary to complete the registration and/or survey forms, and that survey questions asked at the time of registration are of little value because the user provides answers before having used the software. (See col. 1, lns. 26-46). Hecksel therefore teaches away from the user entry of registration information when the user seeks to register the product and teaches away from the user input of responses to a questionnaire.

Though the Examiner acknowledges that Hecksel does not disclose determining whether a registration code is correct, the Examiner contends that such a step is well known, as taught by Rogers, so that it would have been obvious to incorporate such a step into the teachings of Hecksel. However, as described above, Hecksel teaches away from the user entry of registration information at the time of registration and teaches away from the user entry of responses to a questionnaire, and it is therefore improper to combine the teachings of Hecksel with those of another reference, such as Rogers, to remedy the deficiencies of Hecksel. See MPEP §§ 2141.02 and 2145.

It follows that the asserted combination of Hecksel, Rogers and Official Notice is improper and that claim 1 is patentably distinct and unobvious over the cited references.

Claims 6-7 depend from claim 1, and each further defines and limits the invention set out in the independent claim. It follows that each of claims 6 and 7 likewise defines a combination that is patentably distinguishable over the cited art at least for the same reasons.

Independent claim 4 defines an information processing method that includes limitations similar to those set out in claim 1. For at least the same reasons, claim 4 is also patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

Claim 10 depends from claim 4 and is therefore distinguishable over the cited art for at least the same

reasons.

Independent claim 5 calls for a recording medium recorded with a computer readable program for carrying out the method of claim 4. Claim 5 is therefore patentably distinguishable over the cited references at least for the same reasons.

Claim 13 depends from claim 5 and, at least for the same reasons, is distinguishable over the cited art.

Independent claim 16 defines an information processing system that includes the information processing apparatus defined in claim 1. Therefore, at least for the same reasons, claim 16 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

Additionally, neither Hecksel nor Rogers discloses or suggests a menu that permits purchasers to select between (i) a menu item for registering a purchased product and (ii) a menu item for responding to a first questionnaire, as defined in claim 16.

The Examiner also rejected claims 8-9, 11-12, and 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hecksel, Rogers and Official Notice and further in view of Jolissaint (U.S. Patent No. 6,463,149). It is submitted, however, that the claims are patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

Claims 8-9 depend from claim 1, claims 11-12 depend from claim 4, and claims 14-15 depend from claim 5. Therefore, each of claims 8-9, 11-12, and 14-15 are patentably distinguishable over Hecksel, Rogers and Official Notice for at least the same reasons.

Moreover, for the reasons described above, because Hecksel teaches away from the user entry of registration information at the time of registration and teaches away from the user entry of responses to a questionnaire, the teachings of the Hecksel patent are not combinable with those of the

Jolissaint patent.

Additionally, Jolissaint describes an automated voice response unit to which the customer provides an identification code which is used by the unit to query a computer data base for information about the customer. The unit then provides a menu of options to the customer, including a choice as to whether the customer desires to speak with a live agent. Jolissaint does not disclose or suggest receiving a subject of a customer inquiry and a customer identifier from a call center terminal and outputting a reply to the call center terminal based on the subject of the customer inquiry, as defined in claims 8, 11, and 14.

Claim 9 depends from claim 8, claim 12 depends from claim 11, and claim 15 depends from claim 14. Claims 9, 12, and 15 are therefore each further distinguishable over Jolissaint for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, the withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which the Examiner might have.

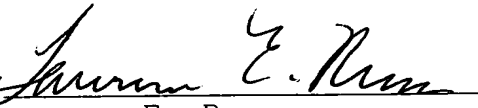
Application No.: 09/800,830

Docket No.: SONYJP 3.0-143

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Dated: January 13, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By 
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